

Message Text

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ORIGIN ARA-14

INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 CPR-01 EB-08 COME-00 AGRE-00 CA-01
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P R 072003Z APR 78
FM SECSTATE WASHDC
TO AMEMBASSY SAN JOSE PRIORITY
INFO AMEMBASSY GUATEMALA
AMCONSUL BELIZE
AMEMBASSY MANAGUA
AMEMBASSY TEGUCIGALPA
AMEMBASSY SAN SALVADOR
AMEMBASSY PANAMA
AMEMBASSY MEXICO

C O N F I D E N T I A L STATE 089716

E.O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: PINT, CS

SUBJECT: DISCUSSIONS WITH FONMIN-DESIGNATE CALDERON
1. ASSISTANT SECRETARY TODMAN MET WITH COSTA RICAN FOREIGN
MINISTER-DESIGNATE RAFAEL ANGEL CALDERON FOURNIER ON APRIL
5 TO REVIEW THE STATE OF U.S.-COSTA RICAN RELATIONS AND TO
EXPLORE OTHER IMPORTANT FOREIGN POLICY ISSUES. CALDERON
SAID THE CARAZO ADMINISTRATION WILL WISH TO WORK CLOSELY
AND CONSULT FREQUENTLY WITH THE UNITED STATES ON A BROAD
RANGE OF ISSUES. AMBASSADOR TODMAN SAID THAT AMBASSADOR
WEISSMAN WOULD OF COURSE BE AVAILABLE TO HIM AT ALL TIMES,
AND HE WOULD ALSO BE AVAILABLE ANY TIME HE COULD BE OF
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HELP.
2. AT THE OUTSET, CALDERON MADE A VERY STRONG PLEA FOR
EITHER MRS. CARTER OR VICE PRESIDENT MONDALE TO HEAD THE
U.S. DELEGATION TO THE MAY 8 INAUGURATION OF RODRIGO
CARAZO. CALDERON STRESSED THAT THE LEVEL OF U.S. REPRESENTATION
AT THE INAUGURAL WOULD BE THE BEST POSSIBLE INDICATION
OF U.S. SUPPORT FOR A DEMOCRACY SUCH AS COSTA RICA.

CALDERON ALSO REAFFIRMED PRESIDENT-ELECT CARAZO'S REQUEST THAT POLLSTER PAT CADDELL BE INCLUDED IN THE DELEGATION.

3. CALDERON ALSO EXPRESSED CONCERN OVER U.S. ACTIONS AFFECTING MEAT IMPORTS. HE WAS OF THE IMPRESSION THAT THE

U.S. WOULD BE REDUCING THE AMOUNT OF MEAT IT WOULD ALLOW TO BE IMPORTED. AMBASSADOR TODMAN INFORMED HIM THAT COSTA RICA'S 1978 MEAT QUOTA HAD AN INCREASE OVER THE 1977 QUOTA, AND THERE WAS NO CURRENT PLAN TO REDUCE THE 1978 QUOTA. HE POINTED OUT THAT IN 1978, COSTA RICA HAD AN ADDED BENEFIT IN THAT NONE OF ITS 1977 EXPORTS TO THE U.S. HAD BEEN HELD IN BOND TO COUNT AGAINST THE 1978 QUOTA.

4. ON SUGAR, CALDERON EXPRESSED CONCERN THAT COSTA RICA'S GSP PREFERENCE WOULD BE REMOVED. AMBASSADOR TODMAN INDICATED HE WAS AWARE OF NO SUCH MOVE, AND THAT THE ADMINISTRATION WAS NOT IN FAVOR OF ANY SUCH ACTION. HE CAUTIONED, HOWEVER, THAT THIS WAS AN ISSUE SUBJECT TO STRONG PRESSURES IN THE CONGRESS, AND IT WAS IMPOSSIBLE TO STATE CATEGORICALLY THAT NOTHING WOULD HAPPEN.

5. VESCO - CALDERON SAID CARAZO WAS DETERMINED TO GET VESCO OUT OF COSTA RICA AS SOON AFTER MAY 8 AS POSSIBLE, UNLESS HE IS BARRED BY LEGAL IMPEDIMENTS FROM TAKING SUCH ACTION. AMBASSADOR TODMAN MADE CLEAR THAT AN EXPULSION TO CONFIDENTIAL

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THE U.S. WOULD BE VERY GOOD FOR US, BECAUSE IT WOULD ALLOW US TO BRING VESCO TO TRIAL ON ALL THE CHARGES FOR WHICH HE IS NOW UNDER INDICTMENT, NOT ALL OF WHICH ARE COVERED BY OUR PRESENT EXTRADITION TREATY.

6. NICARAGUA - THE SITUATION IN NICARAGUA WAS REVIEWED AT SOME LENGTH. CALDERON SAID CARAZO DID NOT INTEND TO ALLOW COSTA RICA TO BE USED AS A SANDINISTA STAGING GROUND OR OPERATIONAL BASE FOR ACTIONS IN NICARAGUA. AMBASSADOR TODMAN STRESSED THE IMPORTANCE OF MAKING SURE THAT BOTH THE NICARAGUAN GOVERNMENT AND THE SANDINISTAS UNDERSTOOD CLEARLY THE COSTA RICAN POSITION, AND ALSO THE IMPORTANCE OF HAVING BOTH COUNTRIES DO WHAT THEY COULD TO CONTROL THE FLOW OF PEOPLE AND WEAPONS ACROSS THE BORDER AREA.

7. BELIZE - BELIZE WAS A PROBLEM FOR THE CARAZO ADMINISTRATION. STRICT ADHERENCE TO THE PRINCIPLE OF SELF-DETERMINATION WOULD LOGICALLY LEAD COSTA RICA TO COME OUT ON BELIZE'S SIDE. AT THE SAME TIME, BECAUSE COSTA RICA IS A CENTRAL AMERICAN COUNTRY WHICH MUST MAINTAIN RELATIONS WITH GUATEMALA, IT COULD NOT COME OUT FLATLY IN SUPPORT OF BELIZEAN INDEPENDENCE. THE PROBLEM WOULD BE HOW TO GIVE

THIS POSITION THE PROPER NUANCE.

8. MIDDLE EAST - COSTA RICA WILL CONTINUE TO SUPPORT ISRAEL, BUT IT WILL BASE ITS STAND ON U.N. RESOLUTION 242, AND IT WILL NOT BE "MORE CATHOLIC THAN THE POPE" IN ITS SUPPORT FOR THE ISRAELI POSITION.

9. PANAMA - CALDERON SAID THAT ALTHOUGH CARAZO DID NOT HAVE THE SAME KIND OF RELATIONSHIP ODUBER HAD WITH TORRIJOS, COSTA RICA STILL INTENDED TO DO ALL IT POSSIBLY COULD TO BE ON THE BEST TERMS WITH PANAMA.

10. MEXICO - CALDERON CONFIRMED THAT HIS MOTHER WOULD BE GOING TO MEXICO AS COSTA RICAN AMBASSADOR. HE ADMITTED
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TO FEELING ESPECIALLY CLOSE TO MEXICO AS A RESULT OF HAVING LIVED THERE FOR 15 YEARS.

11. PERSONAL AND POLITICAL - CALDERON SAID HE HAD BEEN STUDYING ENGLISH TWO HOURS A DAY, AND WAS BEGINNING TO SPEAK IT. HE WAS ALSO READING IN ON FOREIGN POLICY ISSUES. HE SAID HE HAD TAKEN THE FOREIGN MINISTRY POST NOT ONLY BECAUSE IT WOULD PROVIDE HIM WITH THE SORT OF BROADENING EXPERIENCE HE REQUIRES FOR HIS OWN PERSONAL DEVELOPMENT, BUT ALSO BECAUSE IT WOULD ALLOW HIM TO REMAIN ALOOF FROM SOME OF THE GRITTIER INTERNAL POLITICAL ISSUES DURING THE CARAZO ADMINISTRATION. CALDERON OBVIOUSLY FEELS COMFORTABLE IN HIS OWN POLITICAL POSITION, BELIEVING THAT THE 12 CALDERONISTA DELEGATES IN THE LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY WILL INSURE HIM AN IMPORTANT VOICE IN THE NEW ADMINISTRATION. HIS RELATIONS WITH CARAZO SEEM VERY CLOSE AND GOOD, AND HE APPEARS TO HAVE A GOOD DEAL OF RESPECT FOR CARAZO AS AN OLDER AND WISER MENTOR. VANCE

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